Health hazards of asbestos

662. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to ban all activities associated with asbestos, including its mining, manufacturing, use and trade, on account of the health hazards;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have received a request for ban on asbestos from environmentalists and doctors;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) No Sir. However, mining, manufacture of asbestos and asbestos-based products is regulated as per the provisions and procedures of EI A Notification, 1994. Crocidolite (Blue Asbestos) has been put in the restricted list of imports by Ministry of Commerce, Directorate General of Foreign Trade in October, 1994. Further import of waste asbestos (dust and fibre) has been prohibited by Gazette Notification dated 13.10.1998.

(c) to (e) As per the reports available, no such request from environmentalists and doctors have been received.

Cleaning of Yamuna

663. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the status report proposed by the DDA, Urban Art Commission and other Government agencies on cleaning the Yamuna river;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of reports/project reports already proposed on cleaning the Yamuna river; and

(d) the achievement made in cleaning the Yamuna so far and the Central assistance provided and utilized in this regard?